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A
ROD for the Fool's Back :
OR, THE
Pretending DETECTOR detected :
IN A
L E T T E R

To him that *files* HIMSELF
The Rev. JAMES BULLER, M. A.

OCCASION'D BY
A late scandalous Pamphlet of his,
ENTITLED,
A REPLY to the Rev. Mr JOHN
WESLEY'S ADDRESS to the CLERGY.

By JOHN DOLMAN.

*Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in
his own conceit. PROV. xxvi. 5.*

The SECOND EDITION.

B R I S T O L :

Printed by S. FARLEY, in CASTLE-GREEN, 1756.

[Price Two PENCE.]

(HE 704)



A

R O D for the FOOL'S-BACK :

O R,

The DETECTOR DETECTED, &c.

* Y *

O U R late performance from
the press, in which I suppose
you intended to *oblige* the
world, yesterday accidentally
came to my hand. Upon the perusal of
which, without any great measure of
discernment, it appears to me that you
are not only a stranger to real christia-
nity, but likewise to all good manners,
modesty, &c. or else surely you never
would have begun and ended your pre-
tended Reply with that pride, rancour,
and porters language that you really
have, and for which, if I am not wrong
inform'd, the clergy of the establish'd
church in this city unanimously blame
you. The dislike of one of them
appeared, I hear, by sending you the
price

price of your composition, refusing to foul his fingers with it.

IN the fourth and fifth pages of your scandalous, ill-natur'd pamphlet you take great liberty with some female persons, with whom I suppose you are greatly disgusted, as you there insinuate, at their ignorance in spiritual things, and pretending to that, which you apprehend, they have no business with: but if I may form any judgment of a man's future actions by his past, I humbly suppose, Mr. Parson, that if one of these was to fall in your way, and become as carnal as your lascivious heart desires, that then the heat of your mind would soon be allay'd, and reduc'd to greater softness; that you have been a great admirer of the fair sex in times past, I think, appears to be a matter of fact; yea, even since you have been cloth'd with a black gown and cassock, for the which, it was universally reported, the good bishop BUTLER justly silenc'd you from *preaching, alias reading*, in his diocese, though a neighbouring priest, in contempt of that good man, thought fit to let you exhibit in one of his parish-houses, to his no great credit amongst

the rest of his brethren, except those like Parson *Buller*.

AFTER leaving the female priesthood, as you term it, immediately without mercy you fall upon the male preachers who are in connection with them, and treat them (though by far your superiors) with that language which is peculiar to yourself.

I THINK it might have been well for you if you had stopp'd here, and then the poor *Basketmaker* perhaps would never have thought of whipping you with his switch; but your precipitately rushing forward, and falling foul of him and other preachers, constrain'd him for once to do violence unto himself, to whom it's not agreeable to make the following Reply, and *answer a fool according to his folly*.

By your sophistry, good Mr. *Parson*, you would make the world believe, that the ministers of dissenting congregations are very ignorant men; but to their honour be it spoken, most of them are more learned, and, I believe, all of 'em more gracious than Parson *Buller*; or else I am sure it's very bad for them and their congregations. It's not against
them

them, as you insinuate, that the Apostles charge of ignorance, and wresting the Scripture to their own destruction is levelled, but against such letter-learned Dunces as your self, who appear to be entirely ignorant of the things of God. I think that the scripture declares, *that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God*; and, if I mistake not, Mr. Parson, CHRIST himself said, *that as no one knows the things of a man save the spirit of a man that is in him, so no man knows the Things of GOD save the spirit of GOD, and him to whom GOD reveals them by his spirit*. But I am afraid my talking to you in scripture language is speaking to you in an unknown tongue. It don't appear to me, that your spending a few years at a university to study the classics can possibly give you understanding in the scripture any more than it gave *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*, by his being bred up at the feet of *Gamaliel* some years before. If you say you have read the scripture at the university, doubtless *Saul* did the same when with *Gamaliel*. I own, that when a learned man, through the grace of GOD, becomes a convert, that he shines with

more lustre than an unlearned man possibly can, therefore human learning in its place is of great value.

BUT to return: Mr. *Parson*, if you are ignorant of the *Scripture*, as I fear you are, hear what that church you pretend to belong to says; I say pretend, for with all your cry about her, it is plain you are not one of her sons, for you deny her faith by denying the Doctrines of her, as expounded in the Articles. Surely, *Parson*, with all your dullness you may discern this yourself, for if a body of men are constituted by a certain set of articles, as a consequence of which they derive such a name, be it what it will, will that prove that in future times another body of men, denying those articles, have a right to be called by the same name? I think, without any great need of Logic to prove it, they have not. How then can any man, denying the articles of the church of *England*, be call'd a member of her, much less a minister. But, however, as you are fond of tacking yourself to her for a livelihood, pray for once hear her judgment on this head. I think in her homily upon the scripture she declares,

clares, "that they are not to be understood but by the same spirit which those were endowed with that wrote them," or to that purpose; and if so the consequence is natural, namely, that tho' a man should have all the learning of *Cicero*, *Plato* and *Aristotle*, he cannot understand the scripture, any further *than GOD reveals them to him by his spirit.*

I OWN, *Parson*, that what our LORD did and suffered whilst upon earth was perfect. But can you prove from *that* that the government of the church you make a noise about is perfect also. Surely you must be very vain so to think. Pray what university did JESUS CHRIST ever erect to qualify those he employed to preach his gospel in his life, and after his decease? or what seminary of learning did the learned *Paul* establish for *Timothy* and *Titus* to train up pupils in for the work of the ministry? what shadow is there in holy writ for many things practis'd in the church you would fain make the world believe you love? Your saying that the scripture will prove it, does not at all satisfy me; the proof itself, *Parson*, is the thing I want:.

want: but perhaps you will tell the world that you have tradition on your side. I own then you'll speak something like yourself, as a dear child of *Rome*, with whose family tradition will out-weigh reason and scripture.

As to many of the laymen who have been employed by Messrs. *John* and *Charles Wesley* in preaching the gospel, I think it's out of all dispute to impartial inquirers, that the God of heaven hath greatly blest their endeavours, by making them instrumental towards turning sinners from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God; for if it may be allowed that men reformed in spirit and conduct, according to gospel principles, are made so by the operation of the spirit of God, then those persons thro' whose ministry it was perform'd most certainly are own'd and approved of by God, tho' they were never with you, *Parson*, at a university, to squander away time at peck and toss, which is what I have seen some of the pupils exercised in, nor to bully at a punch-house, as is too common the case.

It's true, it must be own'd, that some small misunderstandings have happened
between

between Mr. *Wesley* and some that laboured with him. But, Mr. *Parson*, will you argue from hence that every one that so does is in the wrong? if so pray what will you make of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, and their difference, mentioned in the Book of the acts of the Apostles? And as to founding a retreat to call them back to their employments who have left Mr. *Wesley*, I apprehend there is no need of it, inasmuch as those you hinted at never left them. You know, *Parson*, that a man's being a soldier makes it his Employment no longer than he is a soldier; and being discharged from that is entirely disengaged from the business of it, and then his lawful occupation is that which he was bred up to, which he never left off following; and if you and I mean the same man, you would have call'd to his board, he never left it 'till God took him into eternity; and I assure you, *Parson*, that I never yet left off basket-making, (or begun bastard-making) nor do expect so to do 'till the cold grave become my lodging; for this day, though I have found a few minutes to write this to you, I have been hard at work at the
old

old employment, and hope to return to it again before the day is ended. As to setting up for ourselves, *Parson*, I shall only account for one; and I here appeal to God for the truth of what I say, as I must answer the same at his bar, that I am every year out of pocket by being employed in what I call the work of the ministry. Ah! *Parson*, *Parson*, if you, and many of your order, did get no more by preaching than I do, I should see the doors of houses for that purpose shut up more than they are: will many of you do any thing without present pay? witness your selling of sermons, and exhibiting them for the most you can. Don't you sell your prayers? what woman after lying-in shall be permitted to return thanks to God, according as the church prescribes, without the money for it? some are not content with making merchandize of persons alive, but will do the same when they are dead. I am not against your having your due, as far as the law allows, let the law be as hard as it will, I am to submit to every ordinance of man for the LORD's sake. But, Mr. *Parson*, does extortion become a man

a man professing to be a minister of JESUS CHRIST? and is not all that extortion which a man exacts more than his lawful due? I think common sense tells me it is.

As to what was done in the days of *Oliver Cromwell*, it no more concerns us than yourself, until you can prove that Mr. *Wesley*, or any of us, justify the proceedings of those times, which is a task far too hard for you. You seem to discover great lenity towards Mr. *Wesley*, and consequently towards all *Methodists*, by forbearing to let the government know the fears and jealousies that many have long since entertain'd of us. Surely yourself don't believe those fears just; if so, let me tell you, you are a bad subject, which perhaps *is the very case*, if you don't make a proper discovery. But hark, *Parson*, the government knows us too well to inflict punishment upon us thro' means of thy invidious pen. Our ever steady attachment to the present happy constitution (which we pray God to continue) whilst many in your communion strove to take the crown from his head in the late rebellion, is to his majesty and his friends

friends well known to be a sufficient proof of our fidelity to him.

You talk a little of your love to the prayers of the church ; but pray, Mr. *Parson*, how often do you attend them besides the times you are oblig'd to read them ? not very often, I fear ; nay, ask your own conscience if you don't neglect your flocks by your non-attendance, &c. in the house of God, at such times as the law enjoins prayers to be read. Methinks I see your cloven foot in pretending great love for the prayers, and at the same time omit them. I think, Mr. *Parson*, and excuse me if I think wrong, that you would make a very good waterman, for you know how to look one way and pull the other.

How mean a thing is it for you to compare the liturgy of the church to a piece of beef ! indeed I am apt to think the latter is more excellent in your esteem than the former, notwithstanding all your noise about it, and that you really value the former, only as it is a means to convey you the latter, together with a bottle of the juice of the grape. That ridiculous advertisement which makes part of your *Billingsgate*

gate composition, a proper answer to it is *Contempt*; only let me say, that it's probable it owes its birth to your self, as you are a person very fruitful in scandal and lies even in the pulpit; for the truth of which I here affirm, that some years past I heard you declare in the pulpit of St. John's, that "the women that followed Mr. *Whitefield* and Mr. *Wesley* were worse than the beasts of the field, for that they would take care of their young by them brought into the world, but that those women left their children to perish and die for want of proper care." Ah, *Parson*, if you had any shame sure you would blush at this wickedness of yours!

You say in the 25th page of your loathsome composition, that during the time of the hard frost, in the year 1740, when the staff of life was much shorten'd, that the masters of this city (to their great praise) admitted and encouraged their labourers to work an extraordinary quarter each day." But, Mr. *Parson*, either your memory is very shallow, or you are a very dunce, otherwise you must appear a very great liar, unless you can make it appear that this frost you speak of was about midsummer; for surely in the winter there is not time enough, as every fool knows, except *Parson Buller*, to work days and a quarter; and if there were such numbers at Mr. *Wesley's* room at the times you mention, it must be something more than a bare itch of hearing, as you are pleas'd to term it, brought them together in so pinching a season; and if that part of your account is true, that they were cloth'd in rags, good Mr. *Parson*, does that imply, that they had not immortal souls? sure you here likewise discover your ignorance of scripture, as that says, *that God hath chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith.* I don't suppose that to be in bed with a woman unmarried several of these cold mornings successively, 'till she proves pregnant, and the fruit of it begins to lift up her apron, in your account was so great a crime as to be at Mr. *Wesley's*, if I may form any judgment by what about that time ap-

peared in the world. You compare the houses of Mr. Wesley's people to sties. Pray, *Parson*, how came you to be so good a judge? did you miss your way into one of them in your nightly searches for a girl. For my part I was in many of them that year, and since, but never saw one single circumstance of what you mention. Ah! *Parson, Parson*, I am afraid your mother spar'd the rod and spoil'd the child.

I DON'T know whither you us'd to bestow that discipline upon your own wife, tho' it seems likely, as you intimate some men at that time did upon theirs, page 26: however, I think the great pleasure you appear to have in relating it bespeaks you an advocate for that sort of exercise. *Let the good women thank you for it, dear Mr. Parson.* I am thoroughly assured that the *Peter's-pence*, as you term them, were never exacted as you affirm. But charitable Mr. *Parson*, did ever a poor woman come to you to be church'd, as is generally call'd, during that time? if so, I don't ask if you forgave what you call your due; but was you no extortioner? or was there ever a poor woman at that time in your district that buried her husband, through which she was left destitute, with orphan children, and you, Mr. *Parson*, forgave any part of the cruel tribute paid at such times? I fear not. How easy then may you view your own face in the glass yourself have made.

THE time taken up in attending Mr. *Wesley's* room can be no great hurt to business, as the morning service is over before six o'clock, and in the evening don't begin 'till seven. I own, that he that preacheth the gospel has a right to live by the gospel; but at the same time it's more blessed to give than receive. I can't think the gospel was intended for men to have so much gain from it, as thereby to ride in coaches and fix, and keep a splended equipage. It's true, Mr. *Parson*, to this you have not attain'd, neither is there any great danger that you should; but if it stood in your way I am apt to think you would gladly catch the golden bait, and be as great a dunce in.

in the midst of it as ever possess'd it. You think it right that every minister should have a competency : I say the same ; but I fear nothing short of *Lambeth* would satisfy you. I suppose, good Mr. *Parson*, and hope it to, that you nor I shall ever live to see a minister in the church of *England* so poor as not, if he wants it, to be able to buy a gown and cassock, unless he is as worthless as yourself, and then it's no matter if he is not able to buy a coat, unless he earns it with his hands.

I DON'T take upon me to say, that either shooting or hunting are unlawful in the sight of God in itself ; but I apprehend it may be unlawfully practis'd, for lawful things may be unlawfully pursued, as was the case with those in the Gospel that were shut out from the marriage-supper. I desire to know, *Parson*, if it's not becoming a gospel-minister to pursue with unwearied pains the best things : if so, is shooting or hunting to be compared with searching of the scriptures ? meditation and prayer, or with advising, comforting, or reproving the flock, as may be most necessary for them.

WHAT has a country 'squire's fish or dogs to do with any thing relating to the gospel, or ministers of CHRIST, page 43, which make so great a part of your nonsense ; surely nothing in any person's account but poor *Parson Buller's*. And as to field-preaching, it is of earlier date, as you might have been inform'd *had you ever read the BIBLE*, than to take its original from the persons mention'd in your 46th page. If Mr. *Wesley* affirms in one page what he denies in another, I leave it to himself to clear up if he shall think fit so to do upon his return to *England*. In the mean time let me advise you as a friend to prepare yourself, for surely when he (who all allow to be a man of sense) takes you in hand, he'll make you appear what you really are, stupid, ignorant, and vain. And now to draw to a period, let me tell you in your turn, that if you have burnt your own fingers thank your dear self for it, it's a fire of your own kindling ;

kindling, and had you not been silly enough to have appear'd in print, perhaps your former follies would never been so well known to the world as they now are like to be. For the present, adieu.

P. S. Mr. *Buller*, You can't be ignorant that your fling at me in your late pamphlet (who that I know of never offended you) was not your first offence given to me, witness your scandalous advertisement (tho' without a name) some time past sent to every news-writer in this city, who, to their credit be it spoken, thought it too weak a thing to insert.

Patience may long forbear to give the blow,
And, god-like, spare the Wretch,
But yet at last chastize the daring rebel.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

" This is to give notice to the charitable and well-dispos'd of all parties in the city of *Bristol*, who are inclin'd to relieve the necessities of a certain country cu—r—te residing in this city, that they have an opportunity of so doing at this time, if they please, by purchasing some of his black-gard composition, which has lately been hawk'd about the streets by two of his offsprings.

E I N I S.